

ARE MEN LUSTING AFTER YOUR WIFE OR DAUGHTER?

Updated June 13, 2006 (first published September 5, 1997) (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org; for instructions about subscribing and unsubscribing or changing addresses, see the information paragraph at the end of the article) -

Christian husband and father, when your wife or daughter goes out in public, is she causing men to lust after her by the way she is dressed?

Many reply, "That is not your business," but I contend that the way women dress IS the business of men other than their husbands and fathers. Men have to look at women, and if they are dressed immodestly it is a tremendous battle not to lust after them.

Man was created with a powerful desire toward the woman, and the fall has placed adulterous thoughts in his heart (Matthew 15:19). Before the fall, man's heart was pure, but that is no longer the case. Saved men wrestle with their old natures, and when they are walking in the Spirit, they resist their natural sinful desires toward women. But even for a saved man, it is a tremendous struggle to resist lusting after an attractive, immodestly clad woman. Most unsaved men, on the other hand, make no attempt not to lust. In fact, they boast in their lusting.

I therefore contend that the way women dress IS the business of men other than their husbands and fathers.

Further, the way women dress definitely is the business of pastors, whose job it is to guide the churches in the paths of righteousness and to reprove and rebuke the believers who are not walking in righteousness.

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:2).

"These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee" (Titus 2:15).

If your wife or daughter goes out in public dressed immodestly, men are lusting after her from the time she leaves the house until she returns. The Lord Jesus Christ said this is adultery. "But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matthew 5:28).

How could lusting and adultery not be the preacher's business?

What is modest clothing? To answer this, simply consider what is attractive to a man. The woman's figure, for one thing. If she wears clothing that sharply accentuates her figure, she is causing men's

attention to be drawn to that part of her, and I contend that she is causing men to lust. This would include tight pants, bathing suits, tight shorts, tight tops and sweaters, and tight or clinging dresses. A modest dress is one that is long enough to cover the thigh (Isaiah 47:2) and that is not tight and clinging and that is not revealing.

You say, "I don't think you should worry about this type of thing."

I could not disagree more. I don't necessarily expect everyone to agree with every jot and tittle of my exact standard of modest attire, but as a preacher I am concerned that a growing number of women in fundamental Baptist churches are dressing less modestly each year. I have observed the decline for 30 years. I believe the chief reason is that preachers are saying less about clothing and other practical aspects of holiness. Have the world's fashions become more virtuous? Have Christian homes become more separated from the world? The very opposite is true, and we all know it.

I believe two of the chief reasons for this decline in standards are as follows:

First, some preachers are worldly themselves and enjoy looking at immodestly clad women. These usually have no standards for their own families, and they certainly are not going to preach standards to the church.

Second, others have high standards for themselves and their families and have convictions that many of the women and teenage girls in their churches are dressing indecently, but they simply don't want to fight this battle. They simply do not want to deal with yet another unpopular issue.

Admittedly, dress is not a pleasant matter to deal with. Carnal women are extremely resistant to a man of God who teaches about proper attire and who preaches against indecent, worldly dress. The carnal woman is strong willed. She and she alone is going to determine how she dresses. If she wants to wear pants, she will wear pants. If she wants to lie on the beach or at a swimming pool half naked, she will. If she wants to run around in shorts, she will. She is not concerned about the consequences. She is concerned only that she is comfortable and fashionable. The fact that she might be causing men to lust after her and to commit adultery in their hearts is not important. She is not interested in trying to understand how men look at women. She doesn't want to hear about the unisex aspect of modern fashions.

Contrariwise, a spiritual woman has a meek and quiet and submissive spirit (1 Peter 3:3-5). Though she might not agree with every detail of how the preacher defines immodest attire, she will submit and go out of her way to avoid even the appearance of evil (1 Thess. 5:22). She does not want to offend anyone or cause others to stumble (1 Cor. 8:9, 13).

A woman's attitude toward these things reveals her spiritual condition.

Further, the husbands of carnal women don't always appreciate a pastor who upsets his wife in this area and stirs things up in the home.

I can sympathize with the man of God who is hesitant to enter this fray, but what excuse will stand up at the judgment seat of Christ?

OUR JOB IS TO PREACH RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND PREACHING IN GENERALITIES AND AVOIDING SPECIFICS DOES NOT GET THE JOB DONE.

Preachers, don't be weary in exalting the highest biblical moral standards possible. Our people should be different from the world. **YOU MIGHT NOT BE VERY POPULAR NOW, BUT JESUS CHRIST IS NOT GOING TO TAKE AWAY YOUR REWARD FOR EXALTING RIGHTEOUSNESS IN A WICKED AGE!**

I thank the Lord for women who are concerned about how they dress and who do not want to cause offense.

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” (1 John 2:15-17).

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Titus 2:11-14).

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